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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 001115

SIPDIS

NEA/MAG; GENEVA FOR RMA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/02/2009

TAGS: MO PBTS PREL

SUBJECT: WESTERN SAHARA: MINURSO SAYS GOM HOLDING UP CBMS

Classified By: Classified by A/DCM Tim Lenderking for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) MINURSO Chief of Staff Philippe Elghouayel told A/DCM May 27 that the UN was in the unusual position of having adequate funding (thanks in part to the US contribution of USD 700,000, A/DCM noted) to go forward with confidence-building measures in the Western Sahara but lacked a green light from the GOM to proceed. Elghouayel said the GOA and the Polisario had both signed off on the action plan for restarting the CBMs, but the Moroccans had proposed three amendments. He said that when ex-SRSG De Soto departed Laayoune to take up his post as UN Middle East coordinator, he was expecting to go to Geneva for a meeting on the CBMs. Elghouayel said the GOM canceled the meeting. No new date has been set, and there is, in Elghouayel's view, "no movement" on addressing the three amendments. Elghouayel said his hunch was that the GOM had come to believe that the CBMs offered greater advantage to the Polisario than to Morocco and volunteered that the problem seemed to be with the Moroccan Ministry of Interior and not the MFA.

¶2. (SBU) Post will follow up with the GOM to ascertain the problem and urge resolution so the CBMs can go forward.

RILEY